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Secretary Baker

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Prerequisites and Principles for Arms Control

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Following is the prepared address by Secretary Baker for the Commonwealth Club, San Francisco, California, October 23, 1989.

As you know, this speech was supposed to be given last week. A terrible tragedy intervened, and naturally I thought at first that I should cancel it.

In view of the suffering, it didn't seem right to come here and speak to you about arms control. But you requested that I fulfill this commitment, and that is a telling sign of your character. It is the truly American character of facing up to disaster, taking its measure, and then getting on with the work. It is the truly bay area character of looking to the future.

Your deeds, beyond the power of any words to convey, are the most eloquent testimony to your resilience; a resilience, I might add, that is capturing the imagination of the whole country. You are working hand-in-hand with one another to turn crisis into opportunity, to turn pain into progress, and to turn a world tossed upside-down right-side up. My heartfelt condolences go out to the families of the victims. And my prayers are with you.

Now I would like to begin my discussion with you today by talking about another October crisis, a crisis from 27 years ago: the Cuban missile crisis of 1962. For it is a crisis that seems so far, far away—so remote from the tragedy you are now overcoming so well.

The contrast in relations between Moscow and Washington in October 1962 and in October 1989 could not be greater. In October 1962, we faced a blustering Soviet Union; its leader talked of burying us. Today, we face a sobered Soviet Union; its leader talks of restructuring his society.

In October 1962, the Soviet economy was growing and ready to feed an unrelenting arms buildup. Today, the Soviet economy is virtually bankrupt.

In October 1962, the Soviet space program raised fears we would lose the race to the moon. Today, the Soviet Union is racing to avoid being left behind as much of the world moves from the Industrial Age into a new century.

And 27 years ago this month, we stood—as you all no doubt recall—eyeball-to-eyeball on the brink of war. Today, by contrast, superpower relations are as promising as we have ever found them since the Second World War. Looking back, the Cuban missile crisis posed the clearest possibility for nuclear war in the postwar era. Looking forward, we face the clearest opportunity to reduce the risk of war since the dawn of the nuclear age.

The President has described our purpose as moving beyond the peace of armed camps to the peace of shared optimism. Last week, I described our strategy for achieving this goal through a prudent search for points of mutual advantage. Today, I want to talk in more detail about one of those points: arms control.

Arms control can lend a strong hand in building an enduring peace, but arms control does not proceed in a political vacuum. Let me be clear: We compete militarily because we differ politically. Political disputes are fuel for the fire of arms competitions. Only by resolving political differences can we dampen the arms competition associated with them. To follow Clausewitz, if war is the continuation of politics by violent, military means, arms control is the search for a stable, predictable strategic relationship by peaceful, political means.

That is why our times are now so full of promise. Over the last 40 years, arms control played only a limited role in shaping the U.S.-Soviet security relationship, because our political differences were simply too wide to allow enduring and substantial progress. Western strength and Western unity sustained deterrence throughout this period when we all lived in the shadow of opposed values and conflicting purpose. Now *perestroika* in Soviet domestic and foreign policy could, in part, lift the shadow. The political prerequisite for enduring and strategically significant arms control may finally be materializing. Surely the President was right when he wrote President

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Gorbachev in June, "We bear enormous—and mutual—responsibility to take advantage of the promise of these extraordinary times to improve international security."

The President and I have both said that we want *perestroika* to succeed. It would be folly, indeed, to miss this opportunity. Soviet "new thinking" in foreign and defense policy promises possibilities that would have been unthinkable a decade ago, such as deep, stabilizing cuts in strategic forces and parity in reduced conventional arms in Europe. Yet *perestroika's* success is far from assured.

Any uncertainty about the fate of reform in the Soviet Union, however, is all the more reason, not less, for us to seize the present opportunity. For the works of our labor—a diminished Soviet threat and effectively verifiable agreements—can endure even if *perestroika* does not. If the Soviets have already destroyed weapons, it will be difficult, costly, and time consuming for any future Kremlin leadership to reverse the process and to assert military superiority. And with agreements in place, any attempt to break out of treaties will serve as one indicator of an outbreak of old thinking.

We can take advantage of the new political climate to consolidate deterrence at lower levels of risk. Through sound and verifiable agreements, we can shape and institutionalize a more stable, predictable strategic relationship. The changing political relationship between the Soviet Union and the United States should be reflected in changing Soviet force structures and strategic concepts. In this way, we can help to codify political progress in military reality and by doing so, underpin that progress and strengthen it.

Strategy and the Changing Strategic Environment

Before outlining the tenets of this Administration's arms control policy, I would like to say a few more words about the broader strategic environment in which arms control must operate.

Politically, the Soviet Union is in the midst of this revolution of *perestroika, glasnost,* and democratization. The new thinkers understand that Stalin's system must change fundamentally if the Soviet Union is, as Mr. Gorbachev has said, to enter the 21st century in the manner worthy of a great power. To this end, the Soviet leadership has done much and promised even more for political, economic, and legal reform. While his reforms need to be extended, codified, institutionalized, and made habitual, the political face of Soviet power is being changed already.

The prospects for reform are just as great, in some cases perhaps even greater, in Poland, Hungary, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and the other countries of Eastern Europe. While the trends should not be overstated, the political foundations of a Europe divided by force since 1945 are crumbling away. We can move toward the President's vision of a Europe whole and free.

These great political changes are set in a time of vast **technological change.** Our military tools are being reshaped by emerging technologies that could offer greater security. Advances in sensor technology, data processing capabilities, and precision-guided munitions present novel ways to strengthen deterrence.

We need to be careful, however, also to see the darker side of changing technological realities. More nations are acquiring the capacity to make chemical weapons and to manufacture missiles. With many of these regimes locked in continuing regional conflicts, the explosive escalation potential of their disputes is obvious.

I would add, too, that these technological changes are taking place in a time of **changing defense economics.** Everyone has noted the Soviet Union's compelling need to convert some of its vast expenditures for the military into domestic reconstruction. The era of rapidly rising defense budgets is over in the West, too. From the new technologies, we are going to have to pick very carefully those weapons that strengthen deterrence most cost effectively.

What do these political, economic, and technological changes add up to? Strategically, the world we've planned for since the Cuban missile crisis is increasingly distinct from the world we actually face. Threats to our interests are changing politically and multiplying technologically. Our capabilities are being improved technologically but constrained economically.

Our fundamental values and interests will endure. But as our strategic environment is transformed, we need to look anew at some of our guiding concepts and approaches. Many long-held assumptions may need to be rethought. Strategy aligns ends and means; as both shift, strategy may have to shift, too.

For example, we need to think about the future of both European security relations and the central superpower strategic relationship. Today's historic political transformations in Eastern Europe—if suitably institutionalized—make such reassessments doubly important. In light of the growing threat to our global interests and power projection forces posed by the proliferation of new technologies, we also need to reconsider our strategy for Third World conflicts. Over the longer term, we need to consider if strategic defense options, deep reductions in nuclear and conventional weapons, increasingly powerful conventional munitions, and shifts in Soviet strategy will alter our requirements for deterrence.

To cope with this changing environment, defense programs and arms control must work together. This is a prerequisite for a coherent, integrated strategy that reduces the risk of war by deterring aggression while promoting American values. Both defense programs and arms control can serve the common goals of enhancing stability, ensuring predictability, and bolstering deterrence. As our strategy may change in response to an evolving strategic environment, so, too, our defense programs and arms control positions would also change. Together, security will be enhanced.

Clearly, neither defense programs nor arms control can do the job alone. To maintain the integrity of the triad, we will need to rely upon the deployment of mobile missiles as a key component of our nuclear modernization program. But START [strategic arms reduction talks] can play a key role. It can reduce the Soviet threat to our forces and thereby make survivability through mobility more feasible. Without START to constrain the Soviet threat, the job of ensuring reliable deterrence would be less predictable and affordable. Without the START negotiations, the domestic consensus needed to support essential modernization programs—not only mobile ICBMs [intercontinental ballistic missiles] but also B–2, Trident, and SDI [Strategic Defense Initiative]—would be difficult to sustain. Likewise, without our strategic modernization program, the benefits of a START agreement would be sharply reduced. Thus, our force modernization and arms control efforts reinforce one another.

In September, I announced the President's decision to allow mobile land-based missiles in START. Permitting mobile missiles only makes sense if the United States is willing to deploy them. For this reason, this decision is contingent on congressional funding of our mobile missile program. Congress needs now to support START, not undercut it, by funding this program. As Senator [Sam] Nunn said recently, "Unless we in the Congress can manage to put our ICBM modernization program back on track . . ., the START negotiations face a very bleak and a very long future, indeed."

Another prerequisite for a successful strategy—for defense programs and arms

control that work together—is the need for unity as a nation and as an alliance. This follows from a simple truism: United we stand divided we fall. We should not tempt the Soviets with exploitable differences between the Administration and Congress, or between the United States and its allies. That does not exempt us, of course, from the need for informed debate. It is imperative that we maintain open and honest discussions about strategy and arms control matters within the strategic community and with the public at large. As we deter possible aggression, we must—as the noted military historian Michael Howard has put it—reassure our peoples that their defense dollars are efficiently and effectively supporting the cause of peace. An open, frank debate is the surest formula for unity. But such a debate must begin and seek to reach some resolution before treaties are signed if we are to bring home treaties in the national interest.

The Goal of Arms Control and the Path to It

As a contribution to such a debate, I would like to move now from the prerequisites of arms control to the basic goal of our arms control policy and the principles for achieving it.

The main goal of arms control is to reduce the risk of war—any war, nuclear or conventional. We hope to prevent war by working toward a stable, predictable strategic relationship. Stability requires military forces and policies such that no one can gain by striking first even in the worst crisis. Beginning a war, especially a nuclear war, must never become a Soviet option—even a least-worst option, as a noted strategist once put it. Predictability requires that sufficient openness and transparency prevails to prevent misperception, miscalculation, and an inadvertent war—a war no one wanted but no one could stop. The more open and transparent Soviet military affairs, the greater trust and confidence we can have in Soviet intentions.

Four principles guide our search for a stable, predictable strategic relationship.

First, we seek reductions in first-strike, surprise attach capabilities. We seek stability through proposals to reduce those capabilities most suited for offensive, *blitzkrieg*-style actions and preemptive first-strikes. In CFE [Negotiations on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe], we've concentrated on eliminating Soviet advantages in those weapons most suited to seizing and holding territory: tanks, artillery, and armored personnel carriers. In START, we've focused on reducing the most destabilizing weapons, especially vulnerable, silo-based heavy ICBMs, such as Soviet SS–18s. These weapons are suited principally for preemptive first-strikes and not for retaliatory missions. In Wyoming, we proposed banning short-time-of-flight sea-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) tests, seeking in this way to reduce the capability for a Soviet decapitating first-strike. Our START proposals emphasize the relative merits of slow-flying weapons—such as cruise missiles and bombers which are not suitable for a first-strike.

Our SDI program also supports our emphasis on stability. Effective strategic defenses can contribute to survivable, cost-effective barriers to a successful first-strike. That's why we look favorably on the decision made by the Soviets in Wyoming to delink the defense and space talks from START. This Soviet decision to no longer hold START hostage to resolution of defense and space issues removes a key obstacle to a START treaty while enabling us to proceed with our SDI plans. We remain committed to preserving our right to conduct SDI activities consistent with the ABM [Anti-Ballistic Missile] Treaty. And we will use the defense and space talks to explore a cooperative and stable transition to a greater reliance on stability-enhancing, cost-effective strategic defenses.

Our **second** principle—predictability through openness—expands the traditional focus of arms control on capabilities. Every war has its own unique causes, but surely Thucydides made an important general point when he wrote, "What made war inevitable was the growth of Athenian power and the fear which this caused in Sparta." Arms control has mainly focused on the first part of this equation: constraining or reducing destabilizing military capabilities. Now in expanding the agenda, we are working to deal with the other aspect of Thucydides' equation: fears of aggressive intent. We are pushing to make Soviet military activities more open and transparent. The more we know and understand, the more we can be assured that our fears are not results of misperception or miscalculation. Greater openness is the surest path to greater predictability and a lower risk of war, especially inadvertent war.

The President's "open skies" initiative is a clear example of this new focus in arms control. Openness about military forces and activities is at the heart of the talks on confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs) among all the states of Europe. In those negotiations, we are proposing an all-European military data exchange about our forces and weapons programs. In keeping with the spirit of openness we found at the Wyoming ministerial, we signed an agreement on notification of strategic exercises and invited the Soviets to visit our SDI facilities. The chemical weapons data exchange will help us move toward a verifiable global ban. [Soviet] Defense Minister Yazov's visit earlier this month is just one of a series of exchanges that provide face-to-face opportunities to understand the Soviet military. And we've pushed the Soviets to publish a real defense budget that reveals the inputs into and outputs from their defense production process.

Openness in military affairs is just part of our overall emphasis in our dealings with the Soviets on creating open, pluralistic institutions. On his recent visit, Soviet Defense Minister Yazov talked of the increasing influence of Supreme Soviet committees over the Soviet defense complex. We hope that Soviet military power may increasingly be exposed to the salutary effects of detailed and searching public debate.

Greater openness combined with force reductions will support political change as well. In CFE, our proposals will reduce the potential not only for a Soviet *blitzkrieg* but for Soviet intimidation of Western Europe. The Soviet Army we face as a potential army of aggression is to East Europeans an army of occupation. The weight of the Soviet military presence in Eastern Europe will be reduced. Freed from the cold shadow of Soviet military domination, political pluralism and free markets should flourish more easily in Eastern Europe.

A more predictable strategic relationship should also be less expensive. Arms control can, as the President wrote Mr. Gorbachev, "introduce predictability into military planning so that we can slow the pace of military competition." A slower competition could be a cheaper and safer competition. But our desire to save money must not come into conflict with the necessity for security.

The **third** principle of our policy is a broadened arms control agenda, far wider than its traditional East-West nuclear focus. We are broadening our agenda with the Soviets, both in terms of dealing with pressing, global arms control problems, like chemical and missile proliferation, as well as focusing on regional conflicts. In an increasingly intertwined world, a stable, predictable U.S.-Soviet strategic relationship depends in part on regional stability and vice versa. Earlier, I noted that advanced technologies were proliferating to the Third World. Advanced fighters have gone to Libya, Syria, and North Korea. Over 20 states possess the capability to produce chemical weapons. And nuclear proliferation, notably North Korea's reactor program, remains dangerous. Arms control should increasingly focus on such problems.

The President's UN initiative can lead us toward a verifiable global ban on chemical weapons. The President's proposal represents a realistic road map for progress. As a step toward a multilateral ban, we will move bilaterally with the Soviets to reduce chemical weapons to 20% of the current U.S. levels. We will further slash stocks to just 2% of their current levels within 8 years after the multilateral convention goes into effect. This total cut of 98% is a substantial acceleration of previous destruction plans. Then, we will move to zero within 2 years of adherence to the ban by all chemical weapons-capable states.

We realize it may be difficult to persuade problem states such as Libya to join, but we are creating an environment where everyone will have incentives to join and costs to pay for remaining an outlaw. Export controls on precursor chemicals will be strengthened, building on progress made at the recent Canberra conference. The President has also ordered a study on sanctions to deter and punish chemical weapons use and other violations of a convention. States must know that they will pay a price for their inhumanity.

Our **fourth** principle is institutionalization of a safer world. The President aims to reduce the risk of war permanently, not temporarily. We want to see Soviet defensive military operations made habitual. We want to see the new thinking concretely built into the Soviet force structure. We want to see weapons destroyed, not merely removed. And we want agreements that can endure.

Effective verification can ensure that the treaties we sign are doing their job to institutionalize a safer world. Because of the primacy of effective verification in this Administration's approach to arms control, our negotiators have already proposed data exchanges and trial verification measures that would be implemented even before the agreements themselves are concluded. Such measures in START and in chemical weapons will help us build confidence and gain practical experience that will facilitate the conclusion of sound, verifiable agreements.

Neither have we stood still in pressing the Soviets to comply fully with agreements already signed. In September, President Gorbachev informed the President that the Krasnoyarsk radar would finally be destroyed. We welcome Moscow's step to come into compliance with the ABM Treaty.

A Realistic Path to Risk Reduction

These four principles of a more stable, open, broader, and less reversible strategic relationship offer a realistic path to a lasting reduction of risk. It is a path best traveled by steady steps that build on one another, rather than grand leaps that are often as not unrealistic or undone. In START, in CFE—in all our negotiations—we have made fair, responsible proposals designed to find enduring points of mutual advantage. The Soviets have said yes to much of what we have proposed. Now, we have rolled up our shirt sleeves and set to work together to put principle into practice.

We should be clear about the task ahead. We are not on the verge of a perpetual peace in which war is no longer possible. We cannot disinvent nuclear weapons nor the need for continued deterrence. Nor can we completely eliminate Soviet-American rivalry. But that rivalry does not require that we stand on the brink of Armageddon as we did 27 years ago this month. Peace need no longer hang solely on Winston Churchill's "process of sublime irony . . . where safety will be the sturdy child of terror, and survival the twin brother of annihilation."

Deterrence need not rest only on a delicate, technical balance of terror disturbed by periodic crises. Opportunity invites us, instead, to move beyond containment, beyond the cold war, to a new strategic relationship based on a sound political footing.

A new relationship in which the capabilities and incentives to attack first are minimized and the possibilities of strategic defenses are pursued. A new relationship in which Soviet military power is open to the naked eye, not just satellites in the sky. A new relationship in which all the peoples of Europe are free of military intimidation. A new relationship in which effectively verifiable treaties lock-in a lower risk of war. And a new relationship in which arms control aids our people in turning the seeds of war into the fruits of peace.

This is the strategic relationship we seek. ■

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